

SECRET

IHC-MM-134
23 MAR 1970

MEMORANDUM FOR:

SUBJECT:

Staff Comments on Draft Semi-Annual Review
(COINS/075-70)

25X1

Introduction

1. The two attachments are papers prepared by [redacted] (Attachment 1) and [redacted] (Attachment 2) of the staff. Attachment 1 contains some suggestions but does not address the draft report in detail. The major part of Attachment 2 is devoted to a discussion of Part V (Project Manager's Report). This attachment also contains some overall comments on the report.

25X1

2. In reviewing this draft in the staff, we have noted a number of statements which we thought worthy of underlining either because they were changes to statements read in previous reports, repetition of previous statements, or new information. A consequence of this activity is a liberal sprinkling of paper clips. The remainder of this memo will contain comments on some of these.

Part II (Network Status)

3. On page 8 we find that the four NSA [redacted] will not be moved to NSA from DIA until NSA's new system is operating. This may have been the plan from the beginning but I don't recollect it.

25X1

SECRET

- 2 -

Part III (COINS Management)

4. On page 14, [] NSA/consultant is listed as 25X1
working in Software Security. This brings to mind that study that CIA/ORD
sponsored on hardware security. The results of that study made a
25X1 deep impression on [] regarding multi-level security. I
wonder if either NSA or CIA has a similar contract underway on software
security.

5. This raises the more general question, Has COINS manage-
ment ever put together a System Security Plan -- encompassing the
total network? Or would that be a meaningful exercise in light of changes
underway to agency computer systems, the future of the communication
system, etc.

Part IV (Status Report on Objectives)

25X1

7. On page 19 there is another piece of evidence to support the
contention that there is a definite need for the File Inquiry Analyst (FIA).
This person should be the intermediary between the system and the
intelligence analyst; he does not have to be a GS-15. To the best of
my knowledge there is no plan to develop/train/acquire/utilize this skill.

Thus, Approved For Release 2005/04/27 : CIA-RDP80B01139A000100050010-7

25X1

SECRET

- 3 -

8. On page 20 CIA notes that the problems of standards, languages, etc., do not discourage initial use of the system. This is an interesting point in deciding where we assign our priorities.

9. On page 23, DIA suggests that the inclusion of files on COINS be on a trial-and-error basis. On the other hand CIA states that putting a file on COINS is a very expensive undertaking. This contrast highlights the fact that DIA has a lot of ADP files; CIA doesn't.

10. On p. 27 there is reference to a contractor working on a plan for DIA's ADPS center. They expect a report next month.

25X1

Part V (Project Manager's Report)

12. See Attachment 2 for comments on Part V.

Part VI (Participating Agency Reports)

13. The comments on page 42 give one the impression that NPIC is not on COINS as a user because of the hours of operation, which in turn are due to multi-level security problems.

14. Page 55 has NIC's two requirements for files on COINS. The first one is at variance with CIA's needs (see page 18), but the second one sounds very much like CIA's requirement for "information

SECRET

25X1

Approved For Release 2005/04/27 : CIA-RDP80B01139A000100050010-7

Approved For Release 2005/04/27 : CIA-RDP80B01139A000100050010-7

SECRET

ATTACHMENT 1

23 March 1970

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT: COINS Semi-Annual Report

1. I have read the COINS Semi-Annual Report. I find it difficult to find any constructive faults with this report, considering the total environment in which the COINS Experiment has lived. There are redundancies in this report, but that is the way it was designed. There are many situations in this report that could be considered as "chicken and egg" problems. (For example, lack of proper files vs lack of users -- if you have proper files, you will have many users; or if you have many users, they will demand proper files. Which comes first?)

2. The report fulfills its objectives and lists some of the many COINS problems known to General Taylor and many persons in the intelligence community. I could list many problems in more detail than described in the report. I feel that further test, analysis, and evaluation of the COINS Experiment is a waste of time at the present time. There is considerable test data available for examination by anyone. Further analysis will rediscover or redescribe the many well-known COINS problems.

3. One of the major COINS problems is lack of interest or awareness of its existence by the working level management in the intelligence community. Many of the working level management type of persons seem to have felt a lack of need to devote any recent

SECRET

- 2 -

resources to COINS, since COINS may not exist much longer. Therefore, why should they use COINS or provide resources for COINS?

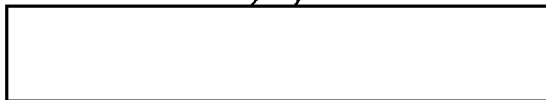
4. I recommend that General Taylor and [] forget the COINS Semi-Annual Report and the lack of success in COINS in the past during the discussion on Monday. I recommend that they use a "positive" approach and let [] tell General Taylor about any constructive ways that General Taylor could be of potential benefit to improve the probability of COINS becoming more successful. [] should provide the suggestions in two capacities, i.e., General Taylor's capacity as Chairman of IHC, and Special Assistant to the DCI for COINS. It is well recognized that General Taylor could accept, reject, or not discuss any of these suggestions by []

5. I wrote five pages of items for potential discussion with [] Then I evaluated them and decided not to recommend such a long list of potential items for discussion. Therefore, the reasonable approach seemed to be to allow [] to select only his highest priority items and pursue those items in detail.

6. I would be happy to brief anyone on my five pages of items for potential discussion on COINS. For example, some of them are:

- a. Need for "warm starts" and its implementation.
- b. Poor quality of communication lines on a frequent basis.
- c. Need for more accurate computer clocks.

- e. Lack of coordinated procedures to report COINS security failures.
- f. More training for the users.
- g. Incompatible keyboards on input-output devices.
- h. Lack of information pertaining to last data^e when the file was updated.



IHC/SS

25X1

S-E-C-R-E-T

IHC/SS ONLY

Attachment 2

MEMORANDUM

SUBJECT: Comments on COINS Semi-Annual Report, January 1970

Overall Comments

1. In light of the objectives set out for it on page 1, the latest COINS Report does a reasonable job. It does inform, it does keep the community abreast of developments in COINS. In fact it tells the story three times in three different ways: by the COINS objectives (repeating each objective for each agency in the system); through individual agencies' reports and finally functionally, that is through reports of each of the functional panels (e. g., User's Training, Communications Interface, etc). Using this technique does a thorough job. It also repeats some of the facts and some of the events three and four times, and this excessive repetition explains some of the imposing bulk of the document, which has a tendency to scare off any but the most ambitious readers from a thorough examination of the document. It could be argued, however, that considering the plethora of sources for the various portions of the report, and the limited audience, it might not be worth the expenditure in man hours to edit out all the repetition. Any point-by-point argument over any or all of the various statements in most of the report would be pointless nit-picking.

S-E-C-R-E-T

~~SECRET~~

ATTACHMENT 2

- 2 -

2. In two places the report departs from a mere recital of the occurrences (milestones! ?) of the half year. Part V (System Manager's Report) and VIII (Progress Report on Task Accomplishment) therefore bear somewhat closer examination.

Comments on Part V (Project Manager's Report)

3. In the Manager's Report, there is a positive look at the progress made during the half year, and viewed in comparison with COINS of 30 June 69 there has been progress. But it is also glaringly obvious from the continuous postponements in the evaluation of the system that there has not been enough progress, and we're years behind the timetable originally envisioned. The reason why is quite obvious by now. The technical problems involved in linking such disparate systems together were so much more complex than envisioned in 1966 -- "we'll all have time-sharing computers soon, and there's no problem in netting them together by data link (state of the art!), let's try it to see if it helps the agencies' intelligence analysts to query each other's file on-line!" -- that the original concept seems helplessly naive! In the two years that I have watched efforts to get COINS underway I feel that its management has done everything possible to get it going, especially considering the problems involved, but in failing to finger the principal culprit in the notoriously late start of the system, I feel the report (for all its length) is incomplete.

~~SECRET~~

SECRET

- 3 -

Attachment 2

4. The system manager follows his progress paragraph with a pretty thorough counting of the deficiencies now afflicting the system (capped perhaps by CIA's limited participation). He spends considerable time pointing out the inadequate development and training of a user community. But while this is obvious, failure to state the chief reason for this deficiency once again makes the report seem incomplete. There are probably other psychological reasons clouding the issue, but the main reason why the subsystem managers have not pushed more training of possible users is because they are afraid to expose skeptical analysts to a system not debugged to the point where the analysts can often enough expect an answer to his query.

5. The manager also treats at some length on the question of inadequate files. The original proposition was "Let's see if the files we're now using are useful to analysts of other agencies on-line!". CIA, for one, did not envision the very expensive building of automatic files just for an experiment, and has steadfastly refused to do so. DIA, the largest contributor of such files to COINS (because they had a tradition of building such files for their own analysts), has lately been quite insistent that they'll build or add no more files without some very impressive requirements, due to the budget slashes. This does not mean that the community should not build required automatic files with funds available. Nor does it need any comments on the CIA theorem that each agency's interests are so specialized that their files are of interest

SECRET

~~SECRET~~

- 4 -

Attachment 2

only to themselves. But to make COINS' success ride or fall on some evanescent dream of "the ideal files" (which we were never able to achieve internally or manually) is foolish.

WHO (of importance) said this? Rudy

6. The paragraph on page 38, where he mentions previous requests for IHC assistance, and his belief that he can expect none, at first seems like a pretty cruel cut (especially if you're sensitive and connected with IHC!). But I think it's really the system manager's rather blunt way of expressing something quite true: IHC will probably not be able to give him the immediate help he desires -- but not for the reasons he suspects. By its very nature, a committee can best attack strategic, long-range problems, and it is very limited in its ability to render tactical, short-range relief. In the latter case a line organization is far superior since it has funds and a task-oriented, pyramided structure. I think in the long run the IHC will achieve through voluntary effort community standards and community files that would not be achieved without it by the agencies alone. But not soon enough to be of much help to COINS (nor to either, I fear!).

25X1

7. The conclusions which the manager draws on p. 38 are pretty unassailable too. The advantages are as stated -- it is an on-going community system, the only one we've got. It is also probably the most expensive system per user that we've got, though the expenses are hidden in agency budgets.

~~SECRET~~

SECRET

- 5 -

Attachment 2

8. The real question is: do the recommendations (pp. 38-39) flow logically out of the conclusions. I think not. The recommendations are familiar (same as the DIRNSA letter). The first one sounds like COINS management wants an all-out assault on the multi-level security problem. I don't think they do. They'd probably pass up the whole problem if given the chance. What they want is to get CIA Hqs. and NPIC on line eight hours a day, so they could have a meaningful test of the utility of COINS. They would have been better off if they'd said, "We want CIA on eight hours a day -- here are some ways it could be done". By being specific (e.g., with software fixes and security suggestions) they don't leave CIA with many options as to how to get on the air eight hours a day.

Comment on Part VIII (Progress Report on Tasks)

9. We can probably look at part VIII (Progress Report on Tasks) with a self-satisfied smirk (if it didn't hurt so much). When we commented on the COINS Master Plan a year ago we said the completion dates for most of these tasks were completely unrealistic. Time has proven this true, and the estimated completion dates on some tasks have been pushed back as much as 15 months.

Summary Comments

10. Still if asked, I would have to say that this report is quite satisfactory in that it does fulfill its objective to inform. We can hardly

SECRET

Attachment 2

be too critical about what it doesn't say. We can hardly expect COINS management to become flagellantes.

11. For our own clarity of thought, however, we should realize that COINS has reached a point where opinion on it has polarized almost too completely. On the one hand we have COINS management who, consciously or not, do not consider COINS just an experiment, but the start of an operational system, who want the best files, the best software, and the best technical development possible with the most use by directed users, before evaluating the system. On the other hand, you have the opposition, best represented by CIA's IHC members, past and present, who want a test as soon as possible and some conclusively favorable findings before expending the type of resources that the files and technical development desired by COINS management represents. It's a chicken and egg situation, complicated by politics and personalities. Whatever either side wants, the other can accuse them of begging the question.

0222
IHC/SS

25X1